The Jerseyman

S.I.T.E. Report

Al Akins & Dave Burgess, Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station (BNJARS)

For those of you not familiar with Navy terms, SITE refers Ship Information Training and Entertainment system, better known as the ship's television studio and control room located on the O2 Level. The information part of the name refers to a nightly shipboard news show that was known as The Captain's Call.

In early July Al Alkins and I were contacted by the BB-62 Sea Cadet staff about changing the format of the annual SITE training made available to the Sea Cadets. Instead of a low keyed introduction to television production could the new format be a full news broadcast that would be aired during the evening meal? Here I must add that Cadets for this year's training week traveled not only from New Jersey and Pennsylvania but guest Cadets were from Connecticut, Florida and other states whose names I forget for the moment.

Al and I started making special trips to the ship for the purpose of going over the system with a fine toothed comb to weed out any problems or potential problems. Along the way we not only refreshed our knowledge of the complex integration of cameras, switcher, sound board, graphics and still images, lighting, special effects and much more, we even managed to increase each other's skills with the system.

On a couple of the trips I made some wiring changes and additions to increase the availability to the SITE system of video from the ship's security cameras. One such change now allows the SITE to select individual cameras at the ship's weather station so that current wind speed, wind direction and outside air temperature can be viewed during the newscast weather report.

On the afternoon of each Sea Cadet training session the Cadets were introduced to the compartments, their use and what the final exam would be. The Cadets then decided amongst themselves who would tackle each of the jobs that ranged from news anchors, sports reporter, weather person, camera operators, floor manager, sound board, video board, graphics, producer and director. All actions would be monitored by Al and me but it was up to the Cadets to do the actions needed to create the final product.

After receiving some basic skills training on their respective jobs the cadets were handed a copy of the afternoon's script for review and practice. Each afternoon's script was different, being based on the following day's Plan Of the Day, actual weather forecast and daily sports news. Did I mention that this was being treated as if it was being broadcast on one of the major TV networks? Well, that was the thought process for this training session.

Once everyone felt comfortable in their positions we ran a dress rehearsal which is when the Cadets found out about the studio lighting. They now know how bright and hot the stage gets after just a few minutes of those lights being energized. For these training sessions we kept the lights "down" to 2,000 watts.

During the dress rehearsals there were the expected misspoken words, missed cues, wrong actor movements, etc which I'm sure made the Cadets question their skills, but when Al said "roll tape, cue action….." there was a total transformation from "what am I doing here" to "we can do this". One group did the job on the first take; two needed a second rehearsal and the fourth needed two tape rolls. In my

book each of these groups earned a grade of “A+”.

At the end of each production every Cadet was seen and introduced by using the above mentioned security system cross connection. For example, the camera that guards the control room was able to view the people operating the controls as their names were read.

Yes there were technical problems, usually introduced by me, that required a restart of the tape but we did not hold that against the Cadets. To the contrary, when it appeared that the weather and sports section of the final product for one Cadet group would be missing its audio due to equipment failure and there wasn’t time left to redo the scenes, the Cadets grabbed the script and headed to the Mess Decks for chow with the intent to lip sync those sections missing the audio. To me this was an impressive response by a bunch of teenagers. Bravo Zulu to them. It is with great relief that we report the audio fault was due to a problem with the tape playback circuit in the Control Room; that the tape was intact and all audio was heard during playback on the Mess Decks.

What were the results of the four training sessions? The first was a totally serious event much like was expected. The second was also serious but with some humor added. The third group introduced even more humor while the fourth was, from beginning to end, a total Lewis and Martin type production which I totally enjoyed. This fourth group didn’t even use their real names; instead they each had a humorous stage name.

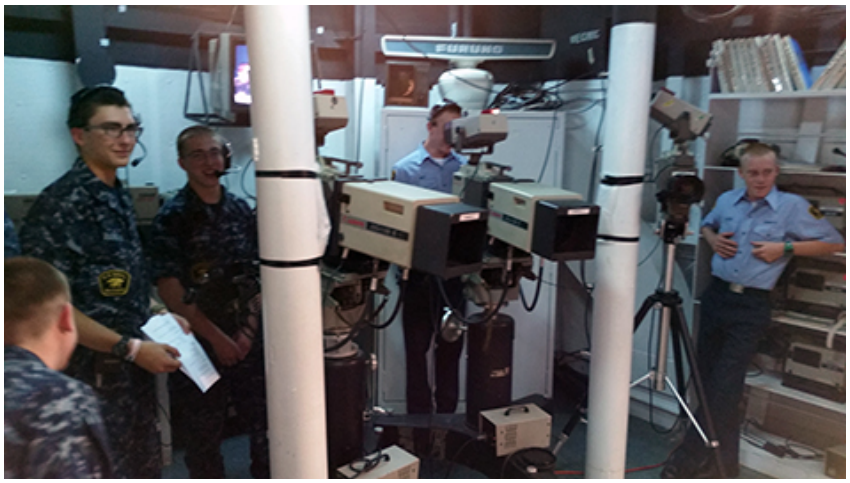
Al and I were only able to view the first nights Mess Deck playing of the tape but the reactions by the assembled mass of Cadets was great. Again, Bravo Zulu to each and every cadet.

In closing I have to report that the Cadets were fantastic to work with, had a total commitment to the project and ended up with products to be proud of.

As a side note I need to mention that this year’s full use of the SITE System has generated a renewed respect for what volunteer Ebe Helm created way back in 2001.

Private note to Ebe; Hey, this was a 7-camera shoot! Now get your &%$ back to the ship and top this action!

Cadets operating the SITE Control Room. Sitting at the console, left to right, is sound, video then graphics. Closest to the camera is the director.



Standing left to right, Floor Manager, Camera 2, Camera 3 and Camera 4. Kneeling is one of the actors during off camera time.

Two of the news anchors discussing their previous days adventures in Philadelphia and the Riversharks baseball game.

Floor Managers view of the News Desk. The Floor Monitor (TV) allows the crew to observe what is being sent throughout the ship's cable system.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Fire Power for Freedom Restoration Project on the Battleship New Jersey

Excerpts from Official Press Release for this effort

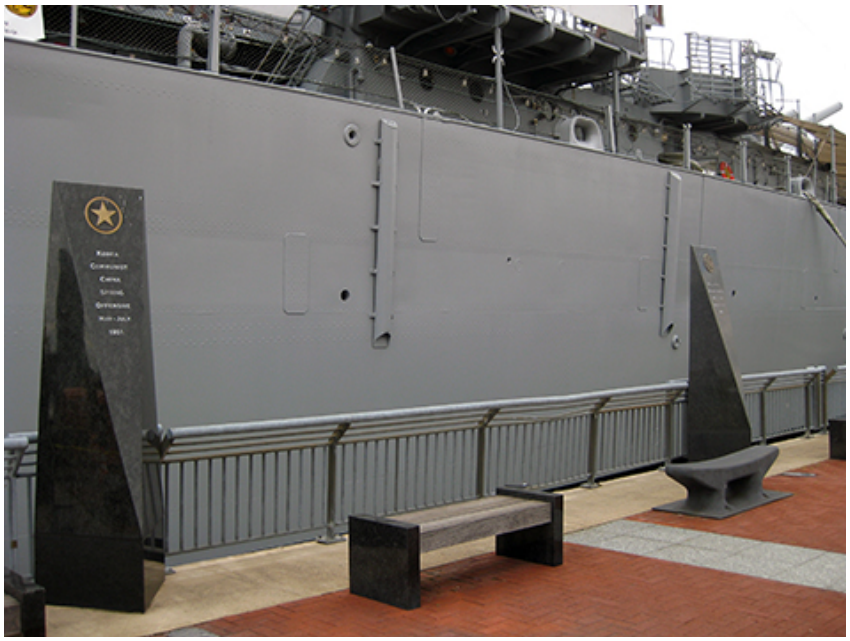
The International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), District Council 711 of New Jersey, donated the workforce and materials to repaint the Battleship New Jersey. This effort kicked off on Monday, September 29th and is now complete

IUPAT undertook this effort to repaint the ship to show their support for our veterans and the City of Camden. The job consisted of a rotating crew of two - four painters over the course of several weeks using their skills and knowledge of industrial painting to preserve the ship for generations to come.

In addition, the IUPAT worked with the Union Organization for Social Service (UOSS) to include a potential locally hired Camden resident for the repainting of the ship. The UOSS was founded in 1944 and provides a wide variety of information and referral programs, senior programs, and volunteer services to all residents of Camden County. It has been designated as the Labor Agency Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Trades Training Program for highly qualified women and minorities in the City of Camden who desire a career in Unions and the Building Trades.

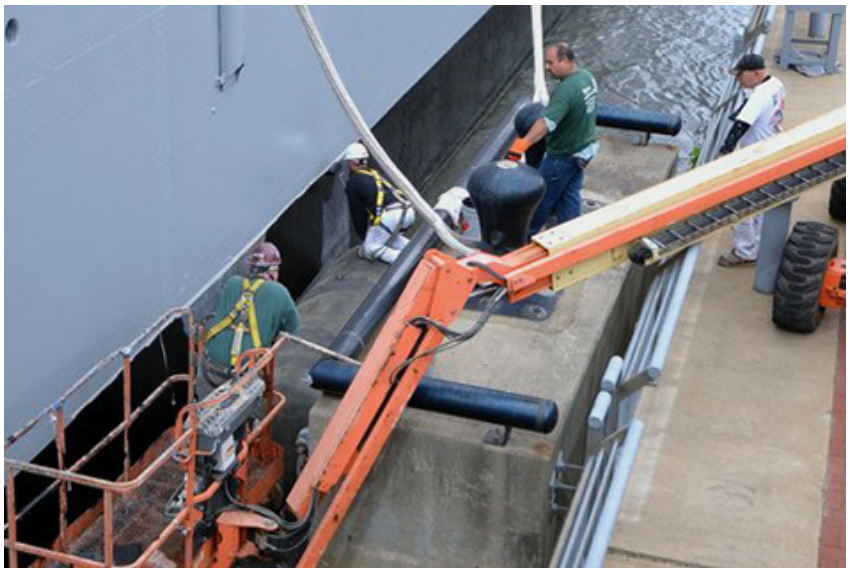
It should also be noted that Sherwin-Williams donated the bulk of the pain for this project, which was surely in tidy sum. If any of you reading this story have the chance to visit a Sherwin-Williams paint store, please say thanks for their generous donation to the preservation of the Battleship.

Ships Hull Painting Photo 1



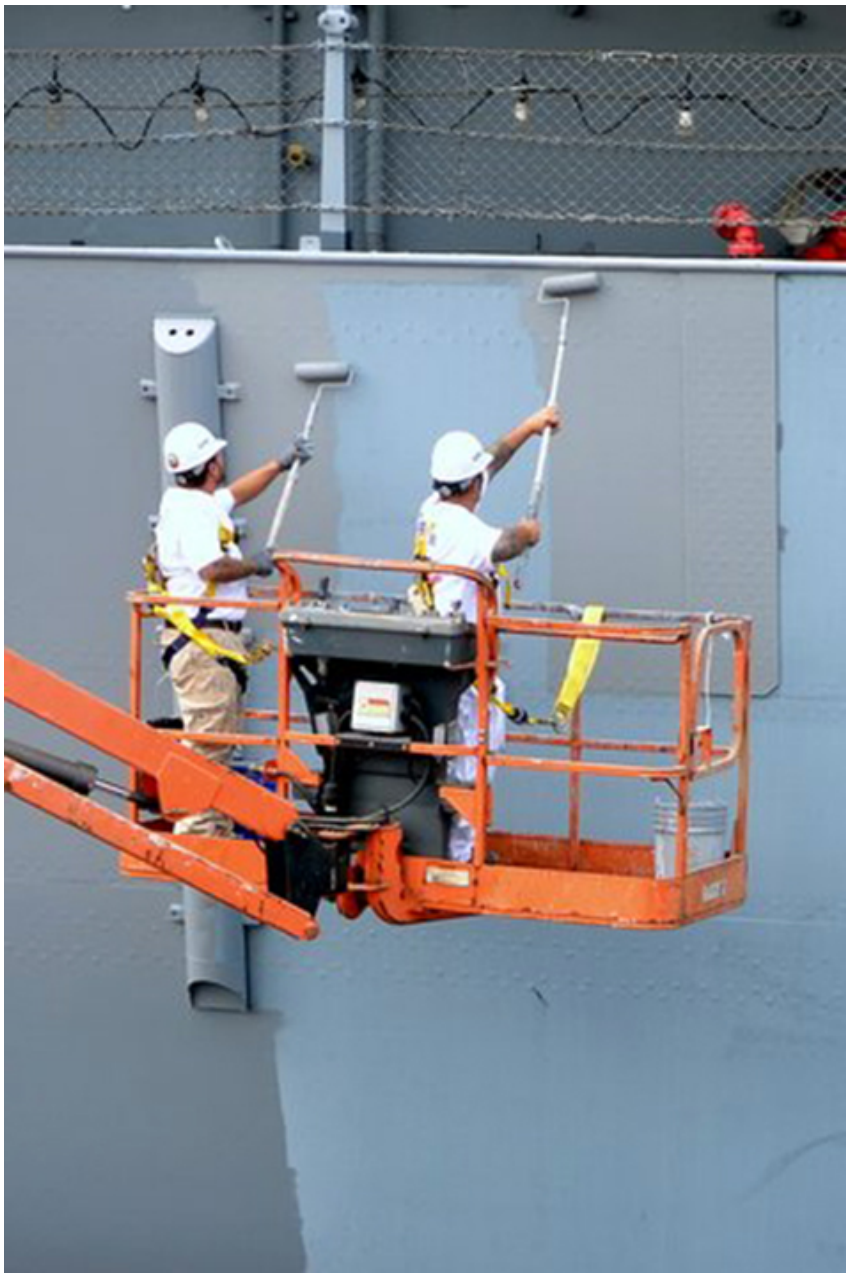
Ships Hull Painting Photo 2

Ships Hull Painting Photo 3



Ships Hull Painting Photo 4

Ships Hull Painting Photo 5



Ships Hull Painting Photo 6

Ships Hull Painting Photo 7

Ships Hull Painting Photo 8

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Progress Report on the Teak Decking Replacement, Port Side Flag Bridge

Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer

As has been mentioned previously in this issue the teak decking replacement project on the port side flag bridge, O3 level, is nearing completion. This project covers about the same area (square feet) as the previous project on the starboard side flag bridge back in 2007. Once this area is completed we hope to start replacing decking on the forecastle and other areas of the ship starting with the $250K that has been raised so far. We need raise about $8M to replace all of the teak decking, so we launched our Dollars for the Decks campaign to help raise the needed funds.

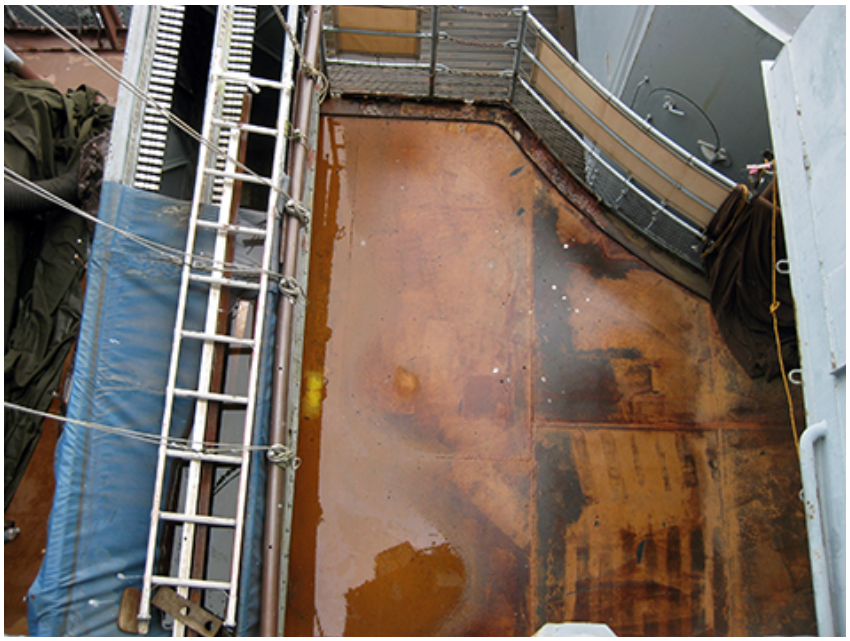
Below are a number of progress shots of the work being done on the port side flag bridge. It still looks kind of messy up there, but I'm hoping that once the planks are sanded and finished they'll look more like the last photo in the series from the work done in 2007.

Following the photos is information on how you can make a donation to help us reach our goal. We can use all the help we can get to successfully complete this project, all donations will be greatly appreciated.

Work area for the project on the O3 level. Just beyond the saw is the port side hatch onto the flag bridge. New teak decking is visible in the foreground.

This photo is from early on in the project, the old teak decking has been removed and repairs to the steel deck have been made. Here we are looking forward towards the location in the photo above.

This is the same location as the photo above, but several months have passed and the new teak decking is now in place.



Here is a shot from above looking down on the port side flag bag. Again this is early in the process showing the exposed steel deck.

Here we see the new teak decking in place in the area shown in the photo above.

New teak decking in the O3 level crossover.

This shot is taken looking aft towards the port side flag bag.

Finally this is a shot of the teak decking that was replaced on the starboard side flag bridge in October 2007. This is a mirror view of the photo above, hopefully when the new teak on the port side is sanded and finished it will look like this...

As mentioned in Phil's article on Page 1 we are engaged in a campaign to raise $8M to replace the aging teak decking on the ship.

To date we have raised about $250K, so we have a long way to go to reach our goal. If you would like to make a donation please send your check to the address below. For processing please put *"Dollars for the Decks"* on the memo line.

Battleship New Jersey
62 Battleship Place
Camden, NJ 08103

If you have questions about the *Dollars for the Decks* campaign you can call Phil directly at (856) 966-1652, extension 211, or send him an e-mail at *p.rowan@battleshipnewjersey.org*.

If you would rather make an electronic donation online using a credit card or PayPal you can do it at the link below.

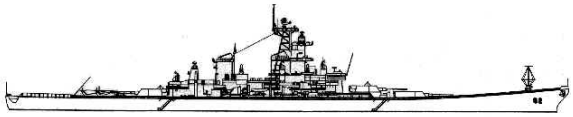
Make an Online Donation Here

Thanks in advance for your support!

Donate a Dollar for the Decks!
Help our nation's most decorated battleship replace her historic decks.
Your donations here will go directly to replace and repairing the ships Teak Decking.
Thank you for your donation!
BATTLESHIP

★ ★

o



For best viewing use Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 or Netscape Communicator 4.61 or newer.
This site is privately funded and maintained, it has no official sponsorships or affiliations.
Please send any Comments or Questions regarding this site to the webmaster.
Last updated on April 03, 2012.